



Missouri State Capitol

Jefferson City, Mo.



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A photograph of the Missouri State Capitol building in Jefferson City, Missouri, taken from across the Mississippi River. The building's large dome is the central focus, silhouetted against a warm, orange-hued sunset sky. In the foreground, the river is filled with numerous ice floes of various sizes, reflecting the low light. The overall scene is peaceful and captures a seasonal moment in the state capital.

Welcome to Missouri's State Capitol

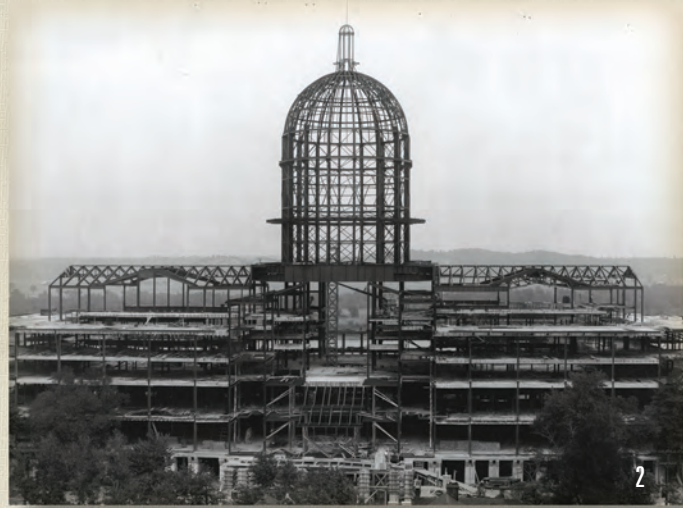
On approaching Jefferson City from any direction, one cannot help but notice the imposing dome of the Missouri State Capitol from miles away. In both location and spirit, the Capitol represents the heart of Missouri's people, culture and politics.

Completed in 1918, the white marble structure covers three acres and contains 500,000 square feet of floor space. Besides serving as the seat of state government, it also features the Missouri State Museum and a renowned display of artwork.

A year-round tourist attraction, the Capitol draws more than a million visitors a year. Many are Missouri school children who come to learn about their state government. Others come from around the world to marvel at the structure's ornate beauty.

Construction and History

The present Capitol is the third to stand in Jefferson City. Jefferson City was chosen to be the capital city in 1821. The city was chosen because of its centralized location in the state and its close proximity to the Missouri and Osage rivers. The first Capitol in Jefferson City was located on the grounds near the site of the present Governor's Mansion and was completed in 1826. The small building, measuring only 40 by 60 feet, was destroyed by fire in 1837. A second Capitol was completed in 1840 near the site of the present building. Although much larger than the first building, space was still



limited and the building was expanded in 1888. On the night of Feb. 5, 1911, a bolt of lightning struck the dome of the second Capitol and the building was destroyed.

On Aug. 1, 1911, a special election was held and Missourians approved the issuance of \$3.5 million in state bonds to finance the construction of a new Capitol. An architectural competition was held and the New York firm of Tracy and Swartwout was chosen from 68 entrants to design the building. Groundbreaking ceremonies took place on May 6, 1913, and the cornerstone was laid on June 24, 1915. Construction of the third Capitol was completed in 1918. The building is 437 feet long and 300 feet wide at its center. The interior and exterior surfaces are comprised primarily of Missouri's Carthage and Phoenix marbleized limestone.



In 1917, it became evident that there would be extra money in the building fund. The Missouri Attorney General ruled the money could only be used on the Capitol. A Capitol Decoration Committee was formed and began the task of decorating the newly built Capitol. With slightly more than \$1 million to spend, the commission spent close to 12 years planning and directing the enhancement of the Capitol. The majority of the artwork on the interior and exterior of the Capitol was acquired by the commission.



1. On Feb. 5, 1911, the dome of the second Capitol was struck by lightening and the wooden frame building was destroyed by fire.
 2. During the construction of the present Capitol, a steel frame was used as the support structure, making the current Capitol more fire resistant.
 3. The placement of the dome cap was the final step of exterior construction for the current Capitol.
 4. This photo shows how the Capitol looked when construction was completed in 1918. Statues and other art were added later.
- Photos courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.*



Architectural Details





1. Ceres, the Goddess of Agriculture, sits high atop the dome as a representation of Missouri's agricultural heritage.
2. This pediment above the main entrance represents many aspects of the state, including progress, agriculture, learning, commerce, law and order.
3. Ornate columns welcome visitors to the main entrance of the Capitol.
4. Hernando de Soto's discovery of the Mississippi River is depicted in a frieze on the south side of the building.
5. Ornate inlay of dogwood and hawthorn flowers along with detailed stone work transform the building from pedestrian to stately.
6. Primitive man is represented in the north frieze. His domination of the bear cub illustrates man's first steps to supremacy.



The Great Dome and Rotunda

The first floor rotunda is just one of the many impressive features of the Missouri State Capitol. The rotunda is 68 feet in diameter and is adorned on the east and west by eight large columns made from ruby granite. Ruby granite is a Precambrian stone found near Elephant Rocks State Park in Iron County.

The bronze state seal is embedded in the stone floor in the center of the rotunda.

Looking up from this area, visitors gain an extraordinary view into the Great Dome. The paintings visible from this area were done by the English artist Sir Frank Brangwyn. Brangwyn executed the paintings in England and they were shipped to the United States to be placed in the dome. The four large panels on the lower dome (first floor) depict the elements of nature: water, earth, fire and air. The four small panels represent man's use of these elements: education, art, agriculture and science. On the upper dome (third floor), the artist depicts four great historical periods of Missouri: the landing of Pierre Laclede in 1764, the pioneer period, the period of settlement and development, and the period of modern construction. The four large figures in the eye of the dome represent the state's mainsprings of prosperity: agriculture, commerce, science and education. The heads of the figures project to the center of the dome's eye where the 12 signs of the zodiac are painted.



The Executive Offices



The state seal on the ceiling of the Governor's office is a simple but elegant reminder to visitors that they are in the highest office in state government.

From the central rotunda of the first floor, the sweeping double staircase leads up to the ceremonial doors of the Governor's office. The oval-shaped room measures 50 by 35 feet and is paneled

with carvings of Missouri oak. On the walls are four large paintings by Gari Melcher dedicated to education and literature. They depict Eugene Field, a children's poet; Mark Twain, author and humorist; Susan Elizabeth Blow, founder of the kindergarten system; and Maj. James S. Rollins, founder of the University of Missouri. Located around the top of the room are 54 seals — one for each of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia, the United States, Puerto Rico and Guam. A brilliantly colored state seal is woven into the carpet.



Susan Elizabeth Blow started the country's first kindergarten program in St. Louis. The painting of her is one of four paintings in the Governor's office.



The lunette above the Governor's elevator illustrates Missouri's first state Capitol in St. Charles.

First State Capitol

Missouri's first legislators met in a Federal-style brick building in St. Charles. Sessions were held here from June 4, 1821, through Oct. 1, 1826, to reorganize Missouri's territorial government into a state system. Today, the building is the First Missouri State Capitol State Historic Site and is managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.



Other paintings in the Governor's office include James S. Rollins (left), who was instrumental in creating the charter for the University of Missouri; and Eugene Field (right) a children's poet from Missouri whose most famous work is "Little Boy Blue."

Lunettes

In addition to housing the major executive offices, the second floor also features a series of half moon-shaped paintings called lunettes, which depict the history of Missouri's natural and cultural resources. These were created by several artists, many of whom were members of the Taos Society of Artists. Many of the paintings on this level were painted in three-point perspective. This technique makes paintings appear to change perspective as the viewer moves from one side to the other.



"Wealth of the North" by Humphrey Woolrych represents the riches of agriculture in the state and shows a typical farm in northwest Missouri. As the viewer passes by this painting, the hayfields seem to change size.

The "Artery of Trade" was painted by Frank Nuderscher of St. Louis. It depicts the Eads Bridge, which was the first major bridge to span the Mississippi River in St. Louis. As the viewer passes by the painting, the bridge seems to change directions.





N.C. Wyeth's "Battle of Wilson's Creek" depicts one of the bloodiest battles in the Civil War. The battle took place on Aug. 8, 1861, in southwestern Missouri. In five hours of fighting, there were 2,547 casualties in an engagement of less than 20,000 men. Union forces, commanded by Gen. Nathaniel Lyon, were defeated by Gen. Sterling Price's Confederate troops. As the viewer moves from one side of the painting to the other, the water current seems to change its course.

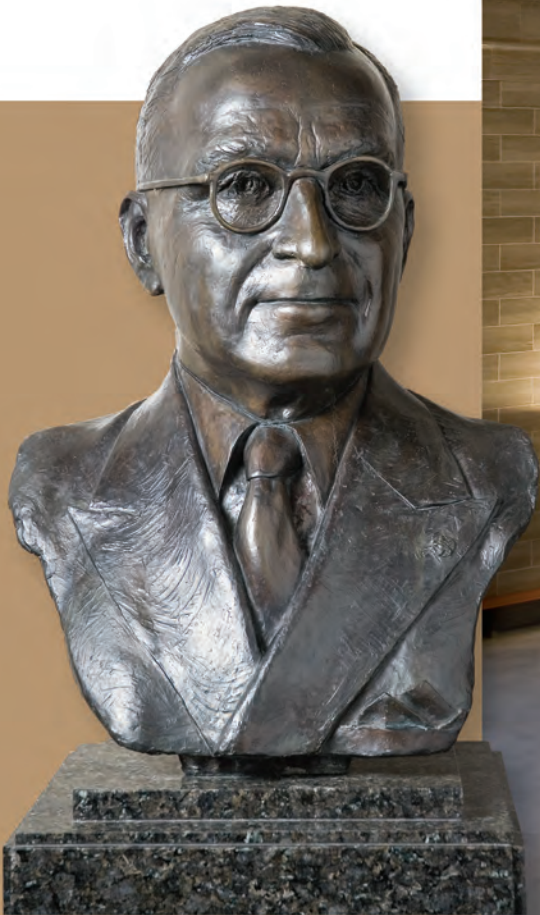


"Old St. Genevieve" was created by O. E. Berninghaus of St. Louis and Taos, N.M. Old St. Genevieve is considered to be one of Missouri's earliest permanent settlements. It was established around 1735 on the banks of the Mississippi River about three miles below the present site of Ste. Genevieve. Many furs and pelts along with lead were shipped from here.



The Hall of Famous Missourians

The Hall of Famous Missourians is dedicated to distinguished men and women from Missouri. Bronze busts of people such as Mark Twain, Thomas Hart Benton, Susan Elizabeth Blow and Walt Disney are displayed in this area.



Harry S Truman





The Whispering Gallery

A feature of the dome is the Whispering Gallery, which was designed to allow even the softest whisper to be heard on the opposite side of the dome.



George Washington Carver



Laura Ingalls Wilder



The House of Representatives

The west wing of the third floor is home to the Missouri House of Representatives. The large rectangular room is decorated with mahogany wood and Belgian linen. The speaker's rostrum is hand carved with repre-

sentations of Missouri's agricultural industry. The overall theme of the room is the "Glory of Missouri," which is shown through the large stained glass window at the front of the chamber and the large mural to the rear.

The mural in the rear of the chamber is the "Glory of Missouri in War." It was painted by the French artist, Charles Hoffbauer, in honor of World War I veterans. It is one of the largest single piece canvas paintings in existence, measuring 19 feet by 49 feet.

On the two side walls are smaller stained glass windows created by H.T. Schladermundt. These windows represent the characteristics of democracy, which are enterprise, progress, honor, truth, virtue, charity, temperance, education, fraternity, justice, law, equality, liberty and knowledge.



The stained glass window to the front is called the "Glory of Missouri in Peace" and was done by H.T. Schladermundt. It features allegorical figures of commerce, mining, agriculture, justice, art and science (the virtues of peace), and they are standing around an enthroned figure representing Missouri. Along the top and sides of the window are the seals for every state that was directly populated through Missouri — every state west of Missouri except Alaska and Hawaii.

The Senate

The east wing of the third floor is home to the Missouri Senate. The large oval room is decorated with walnut wood from Missouri. The president's rostrum is hand carved with depictions of Missouri's agricultural industry. The chamber is dominated by four large paintings representing important men in the history of Missouri. The paintings were executed by Richard Miller.

The next painting is of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark making their presentation to President Thomas Jefferson upon their return from the West Coast.

On the other side of the president's rostrum, the first painting is of Sen. Thomas Hart Benton making a speech in the old courthouse in St. Louis. In this speech, he was discussing the need for building a railroad that would extend to the West Coast.

The last painting is of Frank Blair, an ex-Union general, as he makes a speech in Louisiana, Mo. In this speech, he is denouncing the "test oath." In order to retain their right to vote, the test oath required that citizens of Missouri to swear that they did not provide aid or give comfort to the Confederate cause.

Directly behind the president is a large painted glass window. The window was designed by Richard Miller and made by Paris-Wiley of New York and is a depiction of the landing of Hernando de Soto as he crossed the Mississippi River. He is credited with discovering the river.



The first painting on the right of the president's rostrum is Daniel Boone at the Judgment Tree as he holds court in the Spanish-held Femme Osage District. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources preserves the home of Daniel Boone's son Nathan at Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site in Ash Grove, Mo.



The Benton Murals in the House Lounge

Commentary on the Benton Murals

By Thomas Hart Benton

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In 1933, I had done a large mural for the State of Indiana. Later, on a lecture tour, in 1934, I came out to Missouri and in Kansas City met my brother, Nat Benton, and Senator Ed Barbour of Springfield. We got to talking about the prospects of my doing a mural for Missouri. Afterwards we went down to Jefferson City and had one of these hotel parties, sounding out the various representatives of the State on the project. Everybody seemed to go along with the idea that the State should have a mural by me. So, in due course, \$16,000 was appropriated by the Legislature and I was instructed to do the mural on the walls of the House Lounge.

I lived, in those days, in New York City. I had lived there for 24 years. However, when I started working on the Missouri mural I found it was going to take two years to finish, so I moved out here and reinstituted myself as a citizen of Missouri.

I wanted to have the mural as realistic as possible, which entailed traveling all over the State making drawings of the land and the

people.

After I had my subject matter worked

out, I had to design it,

put it in pictorial form. I also had to get models to take the poses for the positions I had designed, and I had to find Missouri people so as to individualize the characters and make them all look like Missourians. It took eighteen months to do the research and to prepare the design for the mural, and six months to paint it.

Part of the preparation was making a model in clay of the entire mural. The purpose of this was to give a three-dimensional projection for the work, to make the figures stand out one from another, give them an illusionary realism. It also provided a kind of logic of light and shade for the whole mural.

I've heard it said that I invented the idea of sculpting pictures, but this is an old 16th





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century Italian technique. Some of the great artists like Tintoretto and the Spanish artist El Greco used it.

I wanted my mural to be *real*, as I've indicated. In order to make it real, I had to have some reality to refer to, so I made that reality out of clay.

A lot of people thought the kind of realism I employed was misdirected, that it should have all been given over to our famous characters, soldiers, senators, governors, etc. But I wasn't so much interested in famous characters as I was in the ordinary run of Missourians I had known in my youth. So the better part of my mural is of people and things I had actually experienced myself in our State. Only the north

wall and, of course, the panels with old historical subject matter represent things I hadn't directly experienced. But even there I used real Missouri people that I met and knew for models.

There were some State Representatives who thought the mural ought to be whitewashed off the wall after I had finished. But I knew that if the State had spent so much money, they wouldn't be able to do that in a hurry. I figured that by the time they got the votes to do the whitewashing, they'd probably get to liking the mural. They did! So it's still there.

”

Thomas Hart Benton, 1880-1975, is Missouri's best-known 20th-century artist and his paintings are among the most valued of state treasures.

Missouri State Museum

In 1919, the Missouri General Assembly designated the first floor of the east wing of the Capitol as the Missouri Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Hall. Two years later, in 1921, the Missouri Resources Museum was created on the first floor of the Capitol's west wing. The two museums were combined in 1923, and designated collectively as the Missouri State Museum.

Today, the museum continues to showcase Missouri's diverse history and resources. The museum houses both temporary and long-term exhibits, such as exhibits for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. One of the highlights is a significant and rare collection of over 125 Civil War battle flags. Many of the flags belonged to or were captured by



The History Hall tells the story of Missouri's greatest resource, its people, and conveys this history through exhibits and interpretive programs.



Exhibits in the Natural Resources Hall provide visitors with insight into the natural history of the state, as well as illustrating its bountiful natural resources.



Missouri is made up of many distinct natural regions. This exhibit in the Natural Resources Hall represents one of these regions — low lying hardwood forests.

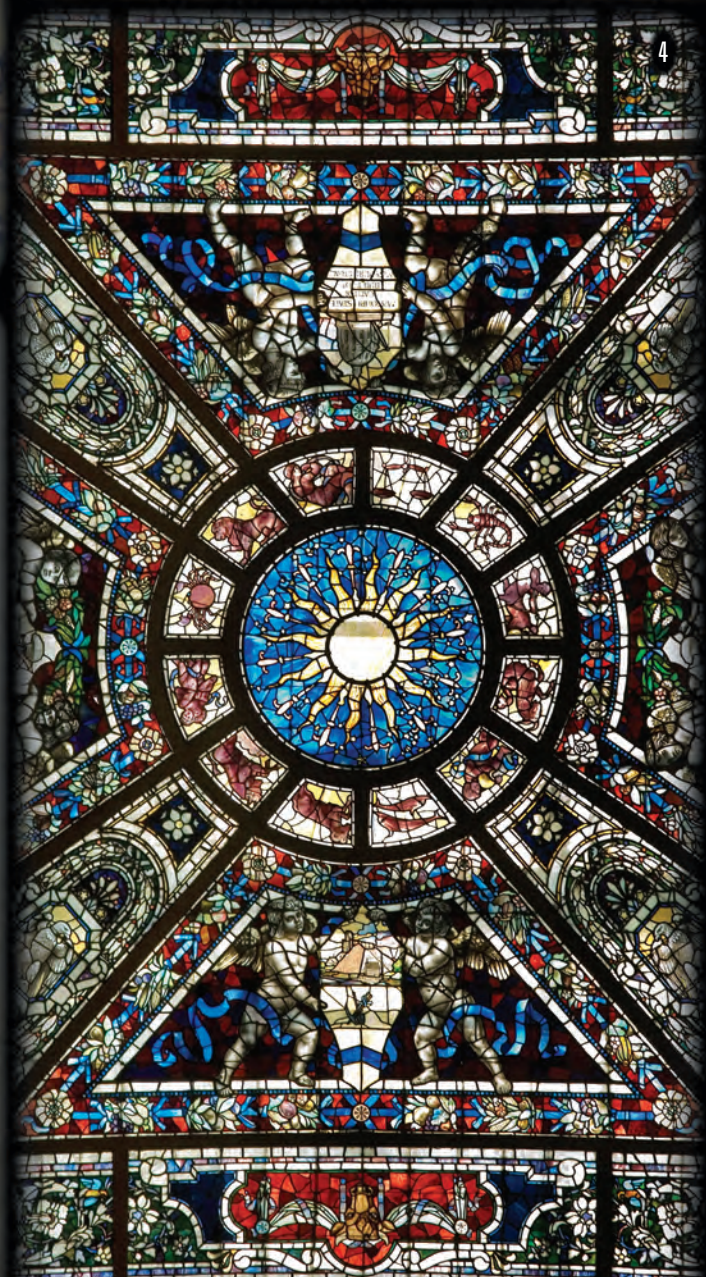
Missouri units on both sides of the war. At least one flag is on display at all times in the museum. Missouri was one of the most divided states during the Civil War and the Missouri State Museum exhibits tell this story.

Museum staff give guided tours of the Capitol and provide interpretive programs on a variety of subjects related to Missouri's history and natural history. The museum also is responsible for managing Jefferson Landing State Historic Site. The Missouri State Museum and Jefferson Landing State Historic Site are managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.



The "Siege of Vicksburg" exhibit depicts the Union siege and capture of Vicksburg, which was a vital victory for the north during the Civil War and gave the Union control of the Mississippi River. Missouri had troops on both sides during the siege.

Decorative Features

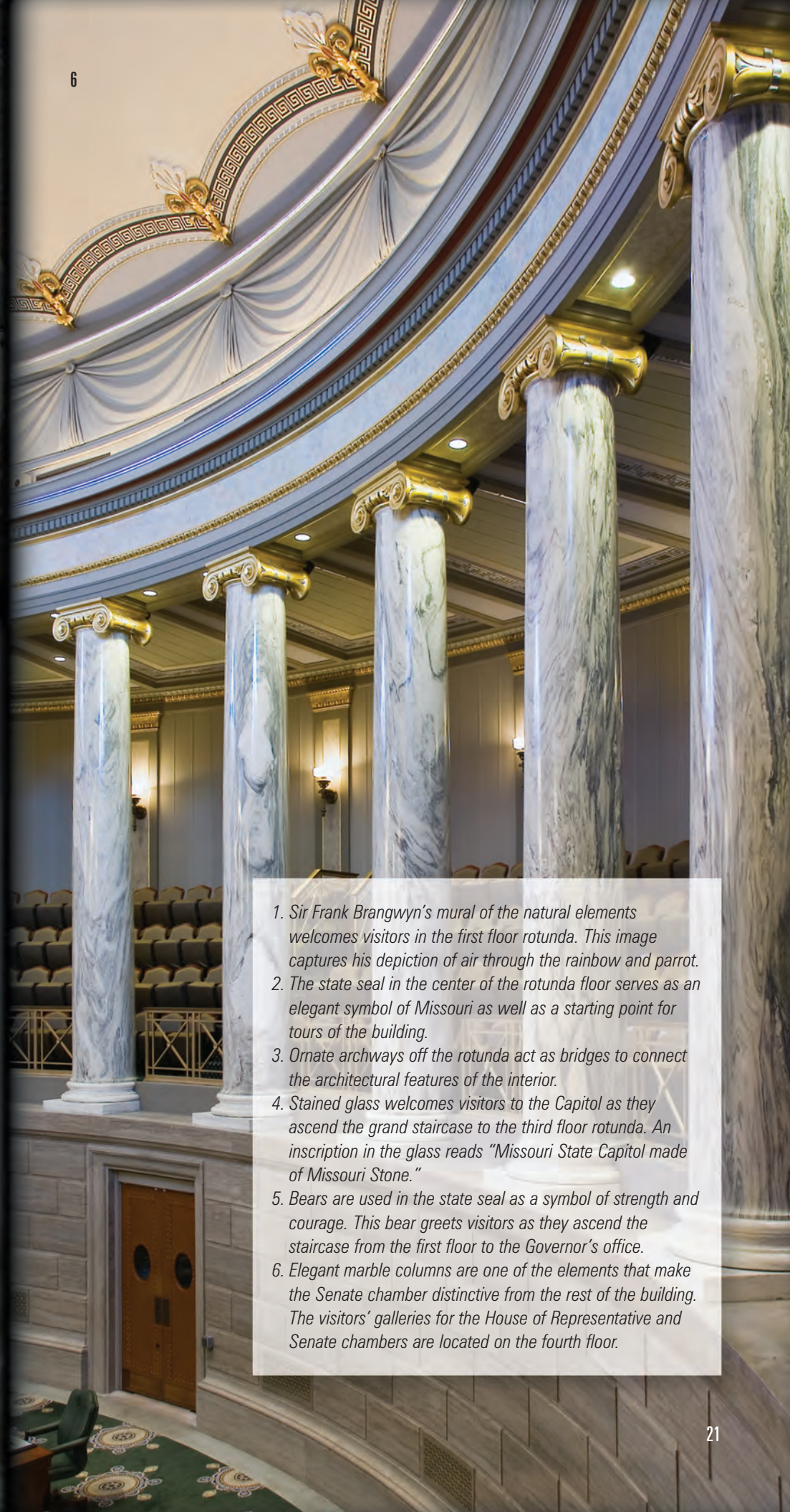




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1. Sir Frank Brangwyn's mural of the natural elements welcomes visitors in the first floor rotunda. This image captures his depiction of air through the rainbow and parrot.
2. The state seal in the center of the rotunda floor serves as an elegant symbol of Missouri as well as a starting point for tours of the building.
3. Orate archways off the rotunda act as bridges to connect the architectural features of the interior.
4. Stained glass welcomes visitors to the Capitol as they ascend the grand staircase to the third floor rotunda. An inscription in the glass reads "Missouri State Capitol made of Missouri Stone."
5. Bears are used in the state seal as a symbol of strength and courage. This bear greets visitors as they ascend the staircase from the first floor to the Governor's office.
6. Elegant marble columns are one of the elements that make the Senate chamber distinctive from the rest of the building. The visitors' galleries for the House of Representative and Senate chambers are located on the fourth floor.

Other Features



The outside of the Capitol possess a variety of statues, fountains and architectural detail. On the north side of the grounds, visitors can view Adolph Alexander Weinman’s “Fountain of the Centaurs” (1), along with Karl Bitter’s sculpture “Signing of the Treaty” for acquisition of the Louisiana Territory (2). The Missouri Veteran’s Memorial, a replica Liberty Bell, and the Law Enforcement Memorial are also located on the river side of the grounds.

The south entrance of the Capitol is bordered by two large sculptures designed by Robert Aitken. The female figure represents the Missouri River, which is often called the Mother of Waters. The male figure represents the Mississippi River, which is often called the Father of Waters (3). Aitken also designed the Fountain of the Arts and the Fountain of the Sciences (4) located on the south lawn of the Capitol.

The grand staircase begins at ground level on the south side of the Capitol. The staircase contains 79 steps and extends to the third floor of the building. Standing at the midway point on the grand staircase is a 13-foot bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson by James Earle Fraser. Jefferson City was named in honor of the president who acquired the Louisiana Purchase. The large bronze doors at the main entrance of the Capitol measure 13 by 18 feet.



Executive Mansion

Standing on the hill one block east of the Capitol is the Executive Mansion (above). It has been home to Missouri's governors and their families since 1871.



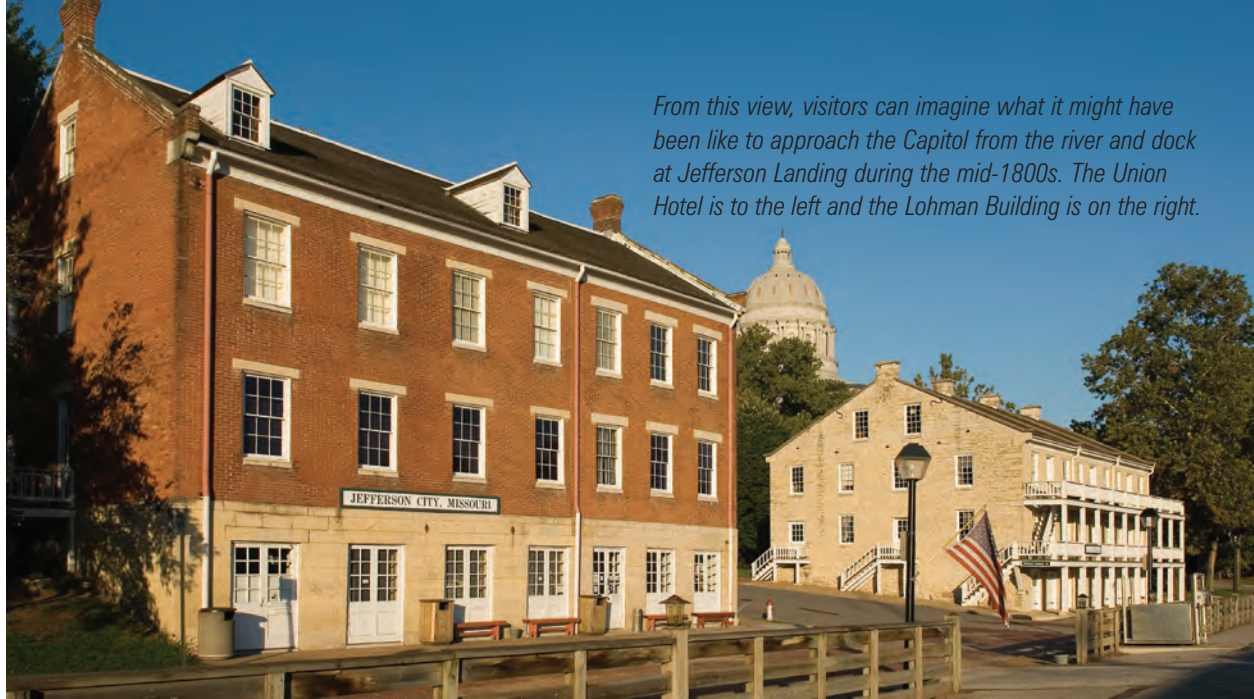
The Missouri Supreme Court

The Missouri Supreme Court building (above) is located directly across the street from the Capitol's main entrance. The red brick structure is the second building to house Missouri's high court in Jefferson City. The original building, built in 1877, was replaced by the present one in 1907 with funds left over from the St. Louis World's Fair. Highlights of this building include the massive marble staircase in the lobby and the impressive two-story high library.



Carnahan Memorial Garden

Located between the Capitol and the Executive Mansion is the Carnahan Memorial Garden (left). The landscaping of the Carnahan Memorial Garden combines with the lawns of Jefferson Landing State Historic Site to create a parklike setting.



From this view, visitors can imagine what it might have been like to approach the Capitol from the river and dock at Jefferson Landing during the mid-1800s. The Union Hotel is to the left and the Lohman Building is on the right.

Jefferson Landing State Historic Site

The buildings at Jefferson Landing State Historic Site are among the oldest in the capital city. In the early days of statehood, river travel was so vital that the state's first constitution required the permanent capital be located on the Missouri River, within 40

miles of the mouth of the Osage River. Two remaining river front buildings (the Lohman Building and the Union Hotel) form the core of Jefferson Landing State Historic Site.

The state acquired the landing area in the 1960s, and made plans to demolish the remaining buildings. Local preservationists protested the loss of the last surviving Missouri River landing complex. The Department of Natural Resources was directed to preserve the site, and restoration of the Lohman Building, Union Hotel, and Maus House began in 1974. On July 4, 1976, Jefferson Landing State Historic Site was dedicated and opened to the public as Missouri's official bicentennial project.

The Lohman Building once served as a warehouse on the riverfront. Today it has a museum gallery, exhibits and theatre on the first floor and offices on the second and third floors. The Union Hotel was once a riverfront hotel. It now contains the Elizabeth Rozier Gallery, which hosts temporary art and history exhibitions.



The Union Hotel houses the Elizabeth Rozier Gallery, which provides a venue for Missouri art and history exhibits.

Back Cover Photo: In the eye of the Capitol dome, Sir Frank Brangwyn has incorporated four figures representing agriculture, commerce, science and education as signs of prosperity in the state.

Photographs by Scott Myers

For more information about Capitol tours, call (573) 751-2854.

To schedule a Capitol tour, visit www.mocapitoltours.com

For more information about Missouri state parks and historic sites, contact:

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